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A Notable Infill
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Photo: Ryan Whitehead

Cover: Partners Katie Penn and Dave Viminitz blend their talents and a penchant for upcycling to create peaceful spaces inside and outside. Story begins pg. 12. Photo: Heather Fritz

HOME Front



Fascinator from Saskatoon's own Sova Design Millinery.

Photo: Heather Fritz

Summer – At Long Last!

Saskatchewan summer. Ahh. Does anyone cherish a flourishing garden, barbecues in the backyard, lazy days at the lake, soft warm evenings with friends on the deck, or making room for perennial lilies more than Saskatonians? We know how precious—and fleeting—this glorious season is. Summer is a time to be savoured, especially after a winter of many, many -30 days and snowflakes in May!

The Saskatoon HOME crew has been putting a great Summer issue together. Here are a few tasty bites we have for you:

Consider the back alley. Fascinating places we don't often think about. But alleyways are loaded with potential for interesting design, function and beauty. Check out our story on spiffing up what lies behind your home.

And look at what one couple did to revitalize their City Park bungalow. When Dave Viminitz and Katie Penn blended families in 2004, the 1928 Craftsman style bungalow Dave bought in 1996 made the most sense as the new home base. What they did with recycled, repurposed and found items paired with a fearless fresh design sense made for an interesting, zen-like space to call home.

Speaking of tasty bites, our friends Roger and Chris at Solar Gardens treated our resident foodie Craig Silliphant and

me to the glory that is wood-fired pizza. I dare you to check out Craig's column and not start dreaming about building your own backyard oven.

There's more! See inside a show-stopper infill home you have likely driven past during the construction phase on Spadina. Read about tiny homes, high tech bathrooms, acreage developments, passion behind sound, even homes that move! For you local history buffs, Jeff O'Brien takes you on a walk down 20th Street memory lane.

As you spend the season exploring your neighbourhood—and beyond—and happen to come upon a home that intrigues you, one you're dying to see inside, let us know! We can sometimes make your voyeuristic dreams come true. Email us with the address and we'll see what we can do.

Enjoy your summer!

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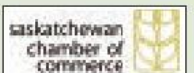
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Thank You To Our Summer Issue Reader Panel



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INTERESTING STORIES, SELECTED BY INTERESTING PEOPLE

Saskatoon HOME is proud to present our Summer 2014 Reader Panel—people from Saskatoon who helped us select the stories for this issue.

We are dedicated to Saskatoon content. There are lots of great things to write about—but which subjects will most interest our readers? To help us make that decision, we first create a list of possible story ideas. We give them to our

reader panel for their individual feedback and ranking, then compile the results to determine our final story list.

You don't need any special skills to be on our panel, and the time required is minimal. The only qualification is your sincere opinion as a reader. Your single task will be to look at the story suggestions and rank them in order of your preference. 

If you would like more information on being on a future reader panel, email info@saskatoon-home.ca with the subject line 'Reader Panel'.

*We look forward to your interest
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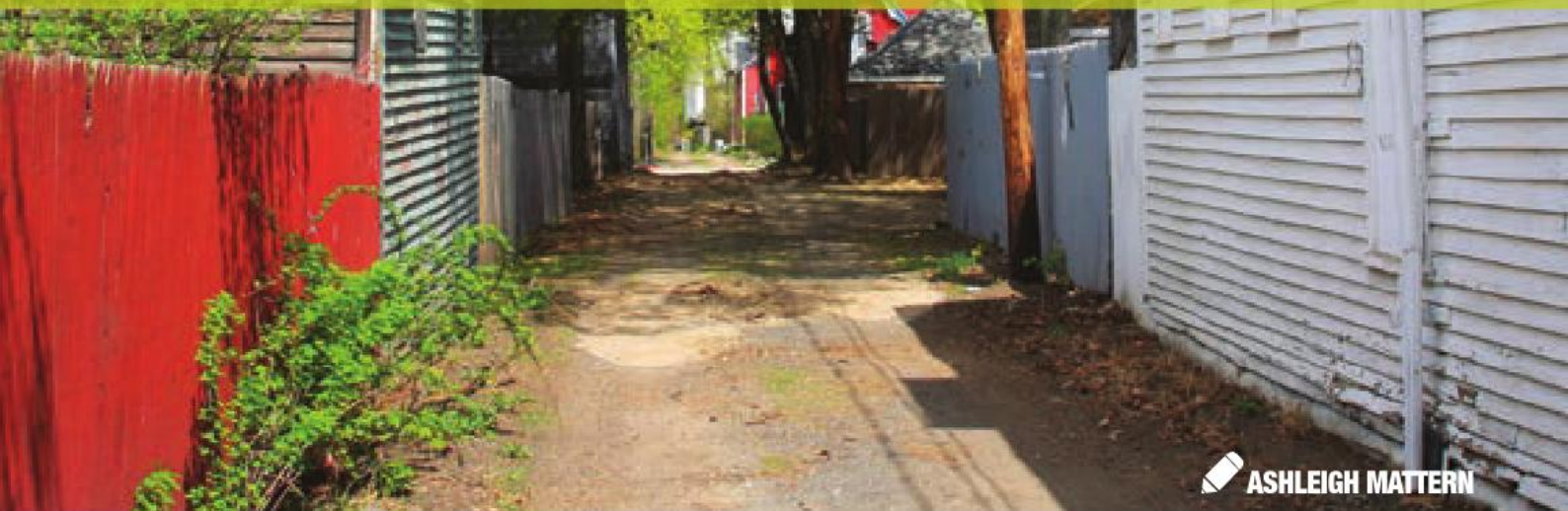
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BEAUTIFYING BACK ALLEYS

Opportunity for a Fresh Saskatoon Streetscape



 **ASHLEIGH MATTERN**

Many people view their back alley as the place to put the garbage, but Crystal Bueckert, designer with BLDG Studio, sees unused potential there.

"We can treat our alleys like streetscapes and create beautiful places where you feel like you can spend some time," she said. "That gets me excited because they can be really desirable places."

The Changing Face

Growing vines or other plants, installing lighting and providing an attractive place for garbage and recycling bins are easy ways to enhance the often forgotten alley.

"Being a person who likes to walk, and walk around cities, I think that when you're able to walk down back alleys

and see how people treat them and how they become streetscapes, then they're actually homey and well lit. I don't see them as a scary place; they're another streetscape," said Crystal.

Cleaning up a back alley can be safer, too. Crystal's own house is an infill home/studio on an 1800 square foot lot with windows facing the alley. She says when she and her husband first moved in, there was some disreputable activity in the alley, but over time there has been less of that behaviour. More eyes on the street means more security.

Listening to the Mews

Part of Crystal's inspiration for beautifying back alleys comes from her experiences

in other cities. She's lived in and visited cities that use their back alleys more efficiently, specifically London, where her husband lives for part of each year. London has old carriage houses called mews that line the alleys behind large city houses. These mews have been converted into new housing.

"This thing that used to be a service road has now become a streetscape," she said.

Saskatoon may be seeing more attention paid to alleys as new zoning bylaws allow for garden and garage suites. Also known as granny suites, these are detached, stand-alone buildings at the rear of properties.

"The simple fact that [the alley] is going to be someone's front yard will really change

the way it looks," said Crystal.

Back Alley Brush-ups in the Works

Businesses can also benefit from beautifying these under-used spaces: BLDG and the other businesses in the buildings between Avenue B and Avenue C on 20th Street are planning to beautify their back alleys this summer. They want to add patios, grow some vines, hang patio lanterns and hold group parties.

"We want it to look nice, we want it to function as a part of our daily working lives and it's a great way to bring the street together," said Bueckert. "It's a lot easier to have a party in the back than it is to shut down 20th Street." 

Ashleigh Mattern



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Upcycling With Passion and Vision



When Dave Viminitz and Katie Penn blended families in 2004, the 1928 Craftsman style City Park bungalow Dave bought in 1996 made the most sense as the new home base.

Katie's daughter, in grade 12 at the time, happily claimed the basement suite, and Dave and Katie set about creating a new comfortable environment that reflected their own tastes and styles. Blending established households of possessions

can be a challenge, especially when styles collide. But when one half of the couple is fearless about demolition, the other has an artist's eye, and both have a penchant for repurposing, upcy-

cling and reclaiming, the end result can be a fantastic mix.

What Goes Around

"When I think back to my twenties, nobody moved into

a newly furnished apartment," says Katie. "I used crates for storage, cinder blocks and boards for shelving. Everybody did. There was a lot of creativity involved in your living space. You were so excited when your parents gave you hand-me-downs and cast offs."

Upcycling, repurposing and recycling is more than just a fad, Katie says. "My daughter is 27 and within her generation, there's an anti-consumer

Upcycling is a term used when taking an item that needs some love, and transforming that item into something of higher quality or value than the original.



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



HEATHER FRITZ

sub-culture. You just don't need to have so much stuff. They value 'vintage' not only for its aesthetic, but also its reduced environmental impact."

Taking Stock

When Dave, a retired SIAST instructor, and Katie, a registered nurse, began their lives together, their possessions got a good shake up.

"We went through several edits. His tastes were more

rustic while mine are a more modern feel. It was an interesting transition," she laughs.

Take Charge of the Potential

Once the blend was complete, Katie and Dave knew a comfortable, functional and upscale look on a budget was their goal. As an interior paint, white's come and gone but any Paris or New York apartment suggests it's timeless.

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colour road and anything you bring home may or may not work," says Katie. "With the classic gallery white, you have so much more freedom."

Changing the orientation of the dining room table and other small moves built their confidence to take on more.

"I'm all about function," Katie insists. "I don't want to live in a magazine. Style is important, and form has to follow function."

"Since my daughter left home, I'd been lobbying Dave to completely reconfigure the house," she adds.

"So we moved our master bedroom suite downstairs, and the upstairs is all public space." All the old windows were replaced with energy-efficient, low e versions in 2009. A small bedroom was turned into a reading room. A Murphy bed allows for more

usable space with storage in a guest room.

"I'm sort of the infrastructure guy," Dave says. "I'm not really that handy, but I can take down walls and build stuff. And I've got a great network of guys who are there in case I get into trouble. It's always ➤

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Pandora's box when you start renovating an old house."

Upscale Doesn't Mean Up-price

Big money isn't necessary for a desired décor. Katie and Dave point to a number of applications that cost next to nothing, like a frosted privacy window coating they did themselves with Home Depot materials. Garage sales, Village Green Thrift Shop, the Habitat for Humanity ReStore and Kijiji are excellent sources of repurposing possibilities.

"We're notorious for hauling stuff home," Katie says. "I know what things are worth and their design value, so when I find something, it's like the IKEA commercial; I grab it and start yelling, 'Start the car!'"

There's a thrill, she says, in the transformation.

Don't be a Snob

Both art lovers, Dave and Katie have decorated with an eclectic array throughout the house, each piece pops

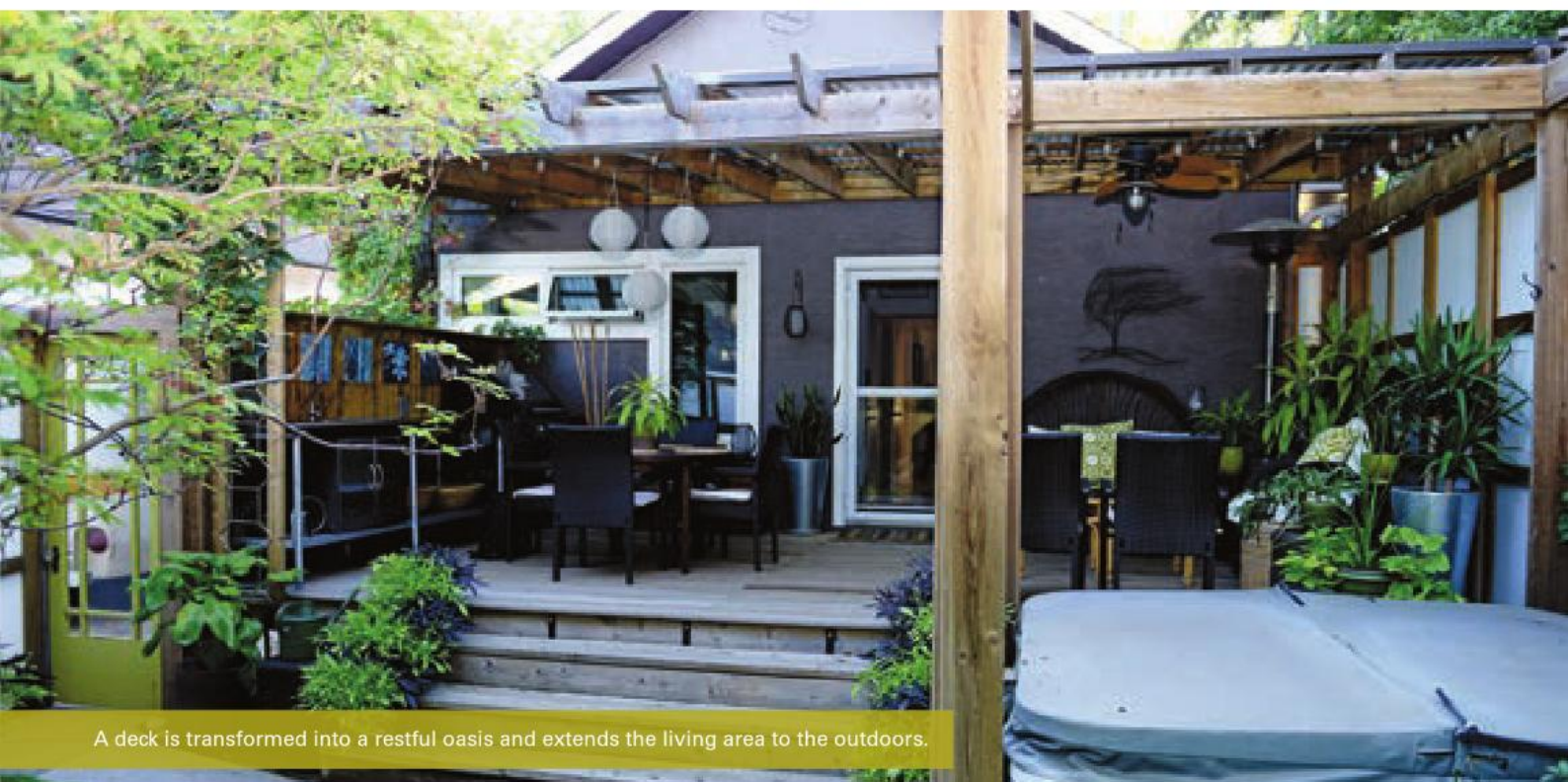
against the gallery white. But art doesn't have to be expensive.

"IKEA is my friend because they have the cheapest frames," says Katie. "Frame what you love. Sources can be your own photos, poster and prints brought home from travels, even tear-outs from calendars. You can mix them up, change them as often as you like." Katie loves the gallery style wall for these reasons.

What's Old is New

In the Viminitz/Penn household, nothing is dismissed until it's been thoroughly examined for its potential. Even then, items are donated to Habitat for Humanity, given away or sold.

"We don't believe in just tossing stuff. If it's reusable, we do that," says Katie. The 1980s golden oak kitchen cupboards were solid, so she bought new doors from Windsor, painted them white and replaced the hardware. She found ➤



A deck is transformed into a restful oasis and extends the living area to the outdoors.



Gallery white walls allow for flexibility in artwork selection and placement.

weathered teak chairs on Kijiji for \$15 each; they're a perfect match for Dave's inherited teak dining room table.

Dave also inherited antique oak drafting stools that perch perfectly at the breakfast bar. His late father, chief surveyor for Saskatchewan, brought them home when the government modernized the Land Titles Building in Regina in the 1960s. His father's favourite 1950s lounge chair, featuring stunning carved lion heads, was relieved of its acid green velvet upholstery. It's important to make the investment when a piece is worth having professionally refinished.

Mistakes can be given a new lease on life, too. Katie admits to sponge painting a gorgeous teak dining table in the 1980s and when it didn't go in a garage sale, she stripped the black and white paint. The piece is now a prized possession, used in their outdoor living space.

Having the Eye

The couple has created an elegant, serene living space both inside and outside their home. Dave credits Katie's "keen design eye" for pulling it all together. "We make a good team."

Katie's "design geekiness" has been a hobby since she was a teenager. "I used to tear out pages from Mom's *Home and Garden* magazines and put them in binders," she says. "When I see something in a garage sale, I kinda can see if and where it would work. I've always just brought things home."

And this will be home for a long time. Although, Dave laughs, "Since Katie works just down the street at City Hospital, she says if we ever break up, she wants custody of the parking spot!" 

Karin Melberg Schwier



Inherited and upcycled drafting stools and a teak dining room table add style with sentimental value.



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ENERGY ORIGINS OF STYLE

Form Meets Function



 **ASHLEIGH MATTERN**

While preparing to build a net zero home, environmentalist and business owner T. Jeannine Paul studied classic architecture and feng shui for inspiration.

"I wanted to know, over the ages, what are the things that are constant and enduring," said Jeannine. "I started to notice that this is not just feng shui, this is energy efficiency.

Then I started to realize how much things like feng shui and classic architecture reinforce good energy design."

Through her research, she found that many of today's design elements that we take for granted had their roots in energy management and conservation.

Today, creating a comfortable environment in your home

is as easy as turning up the furnace or AC, but hundreds of years ago, that technology wasn't an option. Instead, humans controlled heating, cooling, lighting and ventilation through clever design.

What we now see as design details was historically intended to keep out the cold or let in the light. Over time honoured tradition has

become regarded as timeless, heritage and stylish.

Jeannine believes everyone should be taking this history into account when we make design decisions today.

"Well selected features that are decorative and functional at the same time will surprise people on how satisfied they are because they will be more comfortable than they ➤



expected to be," said Jeannine. "Just going for aesthetics can only make you so comfortable."

Temperature Control

Homeowners often choose window treatments for design impact, says Jeannine. But why not optimize function?

"People think of how curtains look, but they evolved as ways to control cold and light. So, a room on the north side of the house benefits from a different colour and weight of curtain than a room on the south, which has different challenges."

Shutters also have a forgotten history. Today, most are completely non-functional, but they evolved as instruments to keep out the weather, says Jeannine.

"I think now, when you look at some of the green literature, we're getting back to functional outdoor shutters again."

A vestibule at the front door

can also help manage airflow and temperature control in the home. Jeannine notes that foyers are a bit out of style, but with efficient housing systems, we might see them make a comeback.

Lighting

Many of the features that can be used for ventilation and controlling temperature also do double duty by providing natural lighting, such as transom windows, sidelights and skylights—allowing you to leave that light switch off for longer.

Even design choices like paint, artwork and mirrors can enhance the natural light already available. Feng shui principles suggest using brilliant white in the northeast and warm colours in the north, says Jeannine.

"Whether to paint a room light or dark colour or a glossy

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or flat finish can make a huge difference," she says. "In south rooms, I would use less reflective paints to minimize glare, while in the north more reflective, because in the north, you want all the light you can get."

Jeannine also strategically includes mirrors and framed artwork to bring light deep into north areas to reflect more light.

Landscaping

A tree in the right spot can provide some of the same benefits of air conditioning, and a deciduous tree will still provide you with sunlight in the winter to warm your house. Good landscaping can help control the microclimate around the house.

"We put shrubs around the house and it looks nice, but in the beginning it had to do with blocking winds," said Jeannine.

Likewise, certain yard features can make life more comfortable without switching on the air conditioner. A porch on the north side of the house can provide a cool place to sit during the summer; a properly designed pergola can block summer heat while letting in winter sun.

Two Sides of One Coin

Jeannine believes many decisions about style would be simplified if we better understood their energy implications. Likewise, energy wise buildings could be more aesthetically pleasing if we fully embraced the history and potential of design features.

She points out that we can often calculate the energy impact of style decisions. "From the colour of the roof, the kind of window treatment used, to where to put a tree. Knowing the energy contribu-



tions of design elements can help simplify many decisions during construction, which is a tough enough task."

Overall, Jeannine thinks too many homeowners and designers believe energy effi-

cient designs have to be ugly. She says there's no need to compromise. "Why choose when you can have both?" (E)

Ashleigh Mattern

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TINY HOMES

An Essential Guide

 EMORY ANN KURYSH

The average house in North America has increased by nearly 1000 square feet since the 1970s. Yet over the last decade there has been a shift in some segments of the population towards the building

of much smaller houses. It is called, appropriately, the Tiny House Movement. This movement is founded in the belief that a tiny house of 300 square feet can offer just as many life perks as one 3000 square feet

or more. They grant the homeowner power of homeownership at a more affordable price point minimizing the feeling of being "house poor," while also lending to a potentially greener lifestyle.

If you are the proud owner of a tiny home, here are some essential tips to help you make the most out of your space.

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a lack of floor space, make use of its wall space. Now is the time to get creative with storage units. Make use of long and narrow shelving, pieces with multiple cubbyholes and wooden crates of all sizes. Hang your electronics.

Use flat surfaces on top of your furniture and appliances. Jamming in crafting or reclaiming items to fit the unique needs of your home is more often than not the best solution.



Small spaces often need custom solutions. There are many stores in Saskatoon that offer custom furniture solutions at a reasonable price.



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Why Swing When You Can Slide?

Do not hold onto the idea of interior swinging doors when sliding doors are the better option. They will free up several square feet of much needed floor space. If you build your home, choose sliding doors that are installed directly into the wall. If this is not a possibility, then purchase an inexpensive barn door kit. Either option is more attractive and distinctive than traditional swinging doors.

Let There be Light

It is imperative for every

room to feel as light and airy as possible. Windows naturally illuminate an area while good quality windows can save homeowners hundreds of dollars a year on electricity and heating bills. Lighter shades of paint instantly create bigger and brighter rooms. Horizontal and vertical stripes on a wall give the illusion of added length and height. Donate or recycle any low hanging, low emitting yellow lighting and invest in units that give off a generous amount of illumination. Quality lighting can do wonders for small rooms.

Away with Room Labels

Do away with the titles of conventionally designated rooms. Each room must serve its own unique role. If the original function of a room itself is not necessarily needed, then change it into one that will be valuable to the overall home. This may mean turning an attic into a bedroom, office into a bathroom, or entryway into a dining room. Just because the rooms in your house were designed to serve a particular purpose does not mean that you have to stick with it.

Go Green or Go Home

If you plan to live in a tiny home, you have made the decision to live greener than ever before. With a lack of room for major or oversized appliances, you may find yourself ridding your home of a dishwasher, dryer, microwave and even a toaster. Your garden may only

be watered with purified grey water while your roof may suddenly be covered in solar panels. Want to reduce your output of sewage? Try installing a Loveable Loo (a particular brand of eco toilet). A greener lifestyle is not only healthier for Mother Earth, but for a home's inhabitants as well.

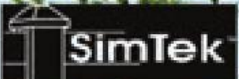
Less is More

This mantra holds great reverence in the Tiny House Movement. Keep in mind that you only need to possess the bare minimum. Truly love every item that you do own, and to get rid of those that you do not. Do not let your closets or cupboards overrun with items. Custom build your furniture if nothing else fits. Purge your home of clutter a few times a year. The bottom line is that there is simply not enough space for all of your stuff. ➤



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Bigger is Not Always Better

In these earth-conscious times, owning the largest house on the block is no longer a bragging right. Tiny homes are a great lesson that

can teach us the distinction between what we want and what we need, how to live within our means and how to reduce our carbon footprint. Rather than a house becoming

a product of its inhabitants, it is tiny homes that shape those who live in them. Size is all relative. (i)

Emory Ann Kurysh



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HIGH TECH BATHROOMS

A Technology Takeover



Technology has infiltrated the bathroom, and many Saskatoon homeowners are embracing the many benefits.

According to Kitchen & Bath Classics Showroom Manager Lori Pelletier, one of the most

popular high tech bathroom trends is the ability to pair music devices with specific bathroom products like showers and tub, extending sound systems throughout the home.

And why not? Bathrooms are often viewed as one of the few places in our home to have some down time and relaxation. Lori has noted that many homeowners are creating an at-home spa in

the bathroom, bringing the therapeutic benefits of relaxation and leisure within steps of the front door. Opportunities for steam, aroma sense, chromasense (light therapy) and audio sense are all in



 AVIVA ZACK

the realm of possibility right at home.

Or perhaps you are looking for ways to simplify your day? Did you ever think we would get to a place where your toilet seat can open when you walk

into the room, self flush and then have the lid close on its own when finished? The future is here, and this technology is available.

While the products that make our lives easier and ➤

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True to the name it is like a spa in your home. The Steamist Total Sense Home Spa provides options of steam, aroma sense, chromasense (light therapy) and audio sense in your custom tile shower space.



Never fight again! In addition to an environmentally-friendly flushing system, the TOTO Neorest toilet has an auto open/close lid and flush feature. It also comes equipped with a remote control to adjust seat warming temperature, bidet and deodorizing functions.

more enjoyable are always on the top of our shopping priority list, there is also a strong desire for energy efficiency and there are many high tech options for the bathroom that save water and heat energy. Products like dual-flush toilets have been around for a while, but still remain very popular. An innovative technology in

bathtubs is the in-line heater, which maintains temperature while bathing so more hot water does not need to be added mid-bath.

Ever notice how having hot and cold being separate handholds on either side of the faucet isn't seen often in the market today? Lori points at this as one of the notable

improvements in the bathroom product space over the past two decades. And there is a reason. Pressure balanced and thermostatic (holding a constant temperature) valves help avoid the painful effects of burns because of scalding water. Now almost all tubs and showers have single handles that are pressure balanced

or thermostatic, and you can even look for digital or "touch" technology.

The home is becoming more high-tech every day. We may not have hoverboards yet, but the future has arrived in the bathroom. 

Aviva Zack

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FINAL DRAFT

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In addition to its elegant design, the Bain Ultra Essencia freestanding tub has AromaCloud which floats over your bath experience like a cloud, a warm touch shell that heats the shell of the soaker tub, Chromotherapy (light therapy) and Geysair technology that keeps water warmer for longer.



Brizo's exclusive, first-to-market technology allows you to activate the water flow with a simple touch to the faucet body, spout, or handle. The touch-sensitive faucet can keep water at a constant temperature and pressure from use to use. This unique functionality makes it easy to activate the water flow only when needed, helping to reduce water usage. This technology operates off a battery pack, so it is suitable for both new construction and renovations.



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ACREAGE AND COUNTRY LIVING

Is it Right for You?



Developers outside Saskatoon are redefining what it means to live in the country. With easy access to amenities and a focus on community building, they're finding a new set of buyers looking to trade in their slice of the city for wide-open spaces and starry nights. If you're considering such a move, there are

several questions you should ask yourself before placing a deposit on that pastoral piece of property.

What Can You Afford?

Aside from the lot price itself, there are often upfront and recurring costs to consider. Depending on the location, these can include

fees for garbage and recycling pick up, septic services and water delivery. You may also need to factor in infrastructure costs such as holding tank installation and/or digging a well. Some developments have community association fees and some do not. You'll want to consider what RM (rural municipality) it's located

in, what the tax base is and if there are any development fees.

What Kind of Lifestyle Are You Looking For?

Gwen Lepage, developer of Sarilia Country Estates, says buyers should start with why. "Why do you want to change where you live? What is going



"Take Me Home, Country Roads."
— John Denver



JULIE BARNES



MAKI FOTOS



Homes nestled in the trees
in Sarilia's river valley.



to be different after you make this move?" She adds, "My clients aren't just shopping for a new house. They want a lifestyle change and that doesn't mean hopping around the city from one neighbourhood to another. They want something else: a view, space and a sense of community. Quite often my clients have

a rural background and have a strong desire to go back to a place that feels like home."

What Nearby Amenities Do You Need?

A family with school-aged children will want to know the proximity to the nearest schools, and if school bus service is provided. Darren

Hagen, developer of Grasswood Estates, says that Grasswood's location is what appeals most to his property buyers. "We offer country living with modern city amenities just minutes away," he says. "There's a school within walking distance and the shops and services of Stonebridge are just five minutes north."

Aside from typical amenities like grocery stores and pharmacies, many buyers will want to know if there are nearby recreation facilities, trails or water access. Both Grasswood and Sarilia offer trails and water access, so they tend to attract nature lovers and outdoor adventurers with their opportunities ➤

A view from Sarilia's river valley at dusk.



for snowshoeing, hiking, biking and canoeing.

What Are the Local Bylaws?

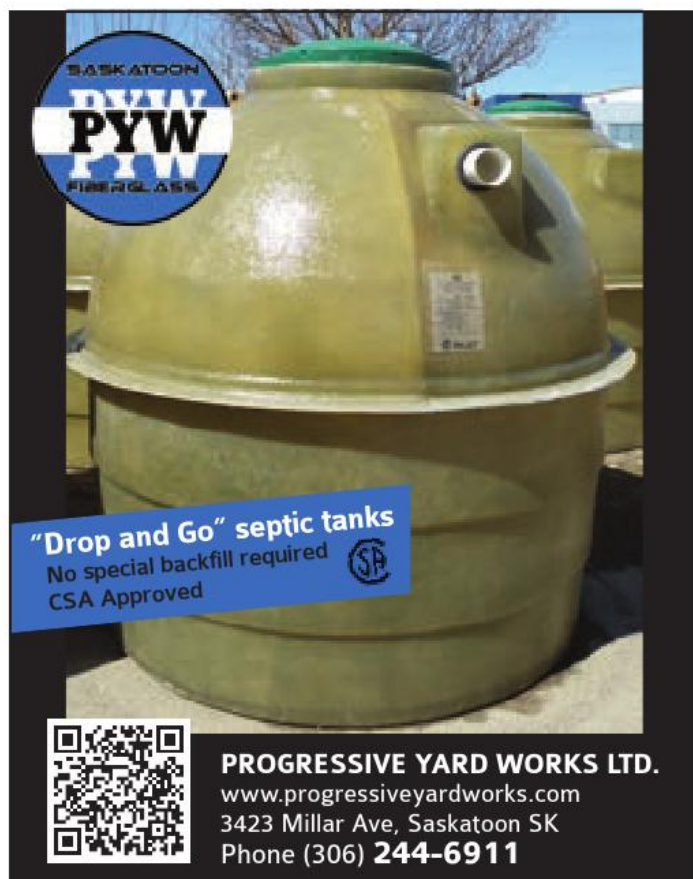
If your big move involves raising chickens, buying a horse, a boat, or taking up

snowmobiling, you'll want to look up the local bylaws of the RM the development is located in to ensure your plans are all above board. Zoning bylaws are set out by each municipality, which divides

the land into zoning districts. Each district may have its own regulations specifying the size, location, dimension and types of buildings allowed, the provision of parking spaces, outdoor storage and landscaping.

What Kind of House Do You Want to Build?

Gwen recommends that property buyers avoid finalizing house plans until after they've settled on a property. "Maximizing an incredible



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Country living often makes an active lifestyle easy to attain with many opportunities right outside your door.

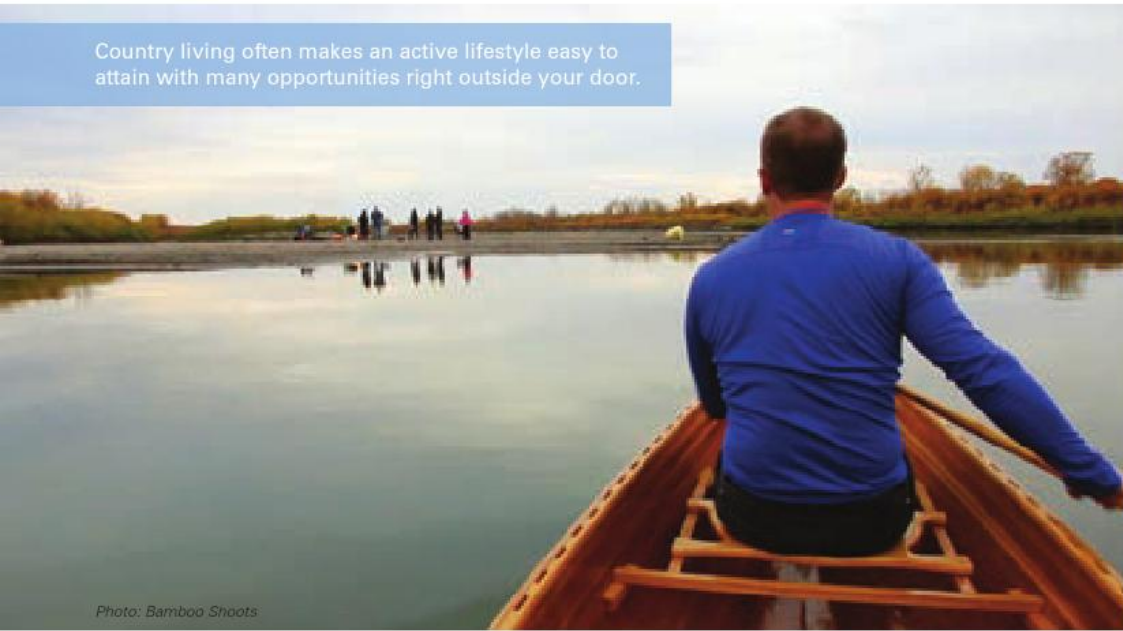


Photo: Bamboo Shoots

view and ensuring privacy may well dictate the size and style of your house and will become a more important consideration than the actual floor plan or style," she says.

If you have a style and size of house in mind, you'll want to ask the developer about

any architectural design standards that might be in place. Such standards are created to protect the value of the development and the homes within it. The standards may regulate factors such as the size, design, height and footprint of the home, landscaping,

outdoor storage, setbacks, lighting and whether pools or hot tubs are permitted.

What Compromises Are You Willing to Make?

Often when we think of the country, we picture a bucolic, peaceful retreat from fast-

paced urban living. Rural life can be idyllic, but just like living in the city, there are certain realities you'll need to carefully consider.

If moving from an urban area, one of the biggest changes may be the amount of yard work involved. Some developments keep the landscaping all natural, while others will require frequent maintenance. You'll need to ask yourself if you're willing to invest in a ride-on mower and devote the time to maintain those wide-open spaces.

If the move involves a longer drive to work, it's a good idea to get in your car and test out the commute during peak and non-peak hours. Once you've tested it, you'll have a better idea if it's an acceptable, comfortable commute. If so, here's hoping those country roads will soon take you home to the place you belong. 

Julie Barnes

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DEVELOPER

If you've found the perfect property, here are a few questions you may want to ask the developer before making your purchase:

- In which RM is the development located? Taxes and permit costs will vary by RM.
- Does the RM charge development fees?
- What upfront and recurring costs will I need to budget for?
- What kind of infrastructure costs can I expect to pay? Examples may include digging a well, purchasing and installing holding tanks, or building a driveway.
- What services are included with the purchase of the property? What isn't included?
- Who is responsible for garbage and recycling pick up?
- Where will my kids go to school? Is there school bus service?
- Who is responsible for maintaining the roads?
- Are there architectural design standards in place? If so, you'll need to request a copy for yourself and your builder.
- Are there any rules in regards to landscaping on the property?
- Are there timelines that dictate when I have to build?
- Can I build a ready-to-move (RTM) house?
- Who will my neighbours be?
- Are there any special zoning regulations, setback or buffers that I need to consider?
- Is there an emergency response plan in place?
- How close is the development to emergency response services?
- How was the property previously used?

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JULIE BARNES



RYAN WHITEHEAD

A NOTABLE INFILL

A Look Inside

In the Spring 2014 issue of Saskatoon HOME magazine there was a story titled *Dream Home For a Dollar*. This article told the story of how a home won in a Kinsmen lottery in 1956 was moved from the exhibition to Spadina Drive, and remains a very noticeable home today.

Back to present day, whether you bike, run or walk the winding riverbank trails that follow Spadina Crescent, or

drive along the idyllic tree-canopied street, you've likely noticed two new modern homes with striking red brick and grey stucco façades, just past Duchess Street across from the weir.

The one on the left is the 2014 Kinsmen lottery home (an interesting coincidence). We thought Saskatoon HOME would take you on a tour as it is Saskatoon's first infill lottery home, the first to be built in a

core neighbourhood and the first one to overlook the South Saskatchewan River.

Built by Lexis Homes, this riverfront showstopper can also lay claim to being the first ever *Mike Holmes Approved* lottery home in Saskatchewan.

A Nod to Detail

Every room of this three-bedroom home is beautifully furnished with contemporary furniture and stylish accents.

A home office and fitness studio complement the space, creating a successful hybrid of high style and functionality.

Interior features echo the exterior finishes with a vertical band of floor-to-ceiling red brick flanking one side of the gas fireplace. The brick was reclaimed from an old Chicago warehouse, giving the space an industrial feel with a vintage appeal. A richly veined wood dining table ➤

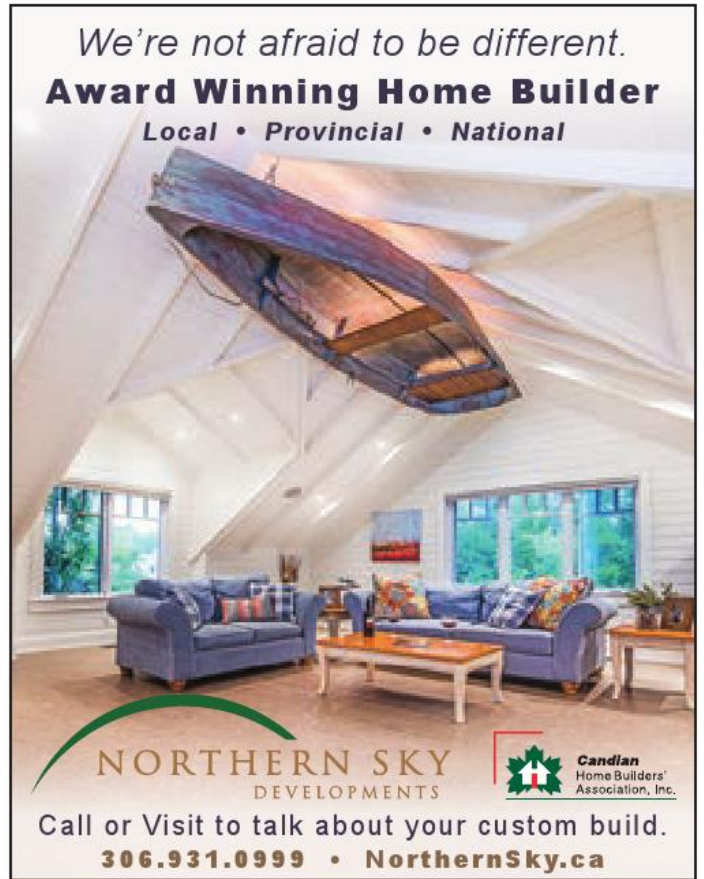
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Large windows throughout the main floor flood the space with natural light and maximize river views.



and the faux-bois tiled ensuite Jacuzzi are a subtle nod to the warm Red Balua wood features found on the exterior.

No detail was overlooked in the design and build of this sleek and sophisticated home. Large windows throughout bring the outdoors in, and a spacious front

porch and second-floor balcony provide further opportunity to take in the watery vista. For Cam Skoropat, co-owner of Lexis Homes, the view of the river was paramount from the very beginning.

"We've learned from previous clients that they

like some division between the kitchen and living room, but don't necessarily want to close off the spaces from one another," says Cam. With that knowledge in mind, a custom, floor-to-ceiling open-shelving feature was used to delineate the two rooms, keeping sight-

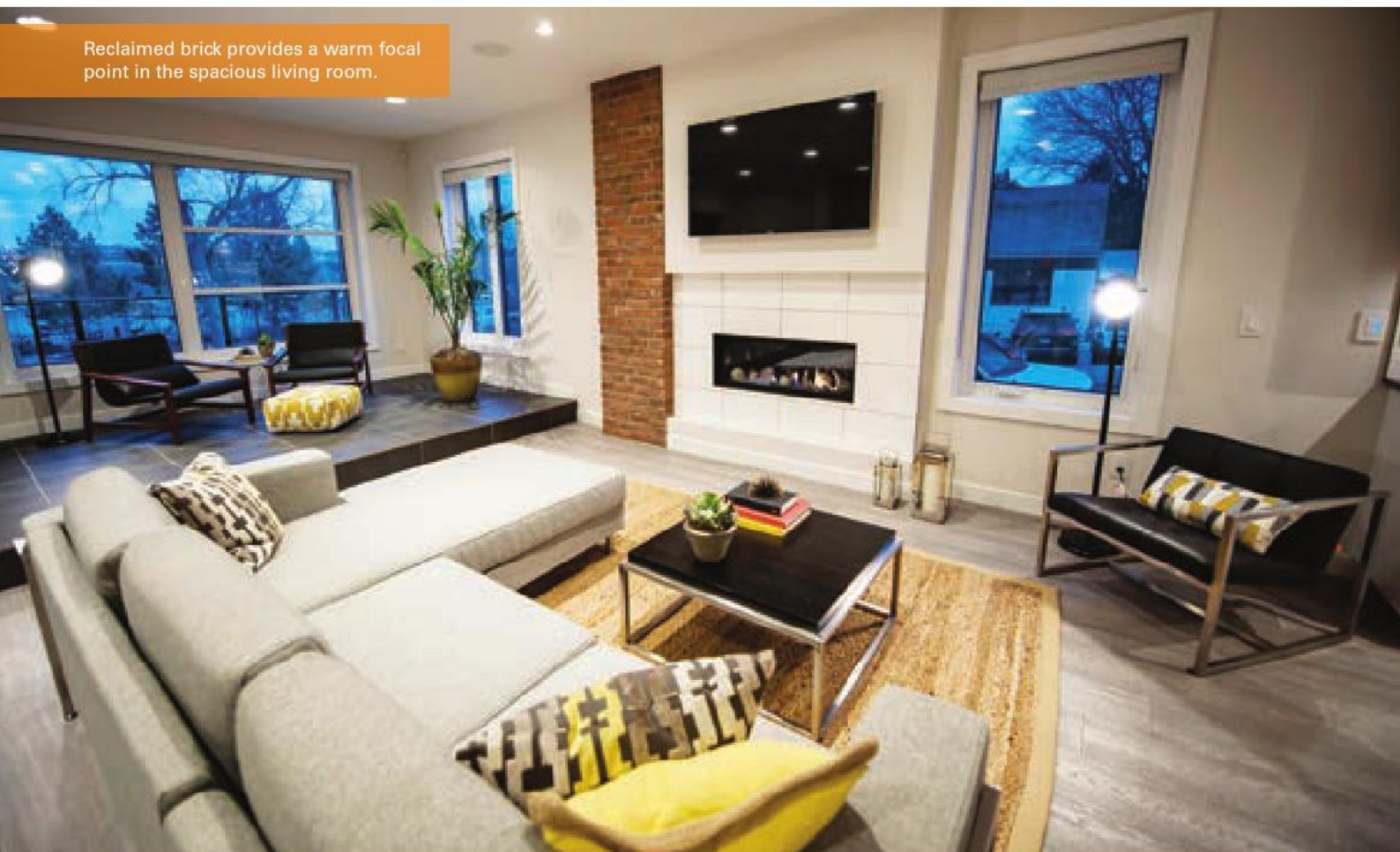
lines to the river open. The result? Natural light is able to travel through the entire main floor uninterrupted, and, most importantly, says Cam, "the river view is still within sight from the dining area at the back of the house."



Unique details such as wallpaper and a vessel sink create an eclectic look in the half bath, while the other bathrooms offer a neutral, calming space.



Reclaimed brick provides a warm focal point in the spacious living room.



Wallpaper is used to provide contrast and define space in both the master bedroom and basement living area.



The spa-like ensuite includes a deep Jacuzzi tub and a separate custom shower enclosure.



Distinctive Location

In addition to the home itself, the lucky winner will gain the freedom that comes from leaving the car at home. Walking distance to downtown, or the university just across the bridge, the central location of the City Park residence gives it further distinction.

"It's hard to beat that, as a location," says Arthur Cradock, chair of the Kinsmen Riverfront Home Lottery. "Having a location like this just stands us so far apart from anything else." Arthur recalls his first tour of the completed house, "I was blown away by the view. Even though I knew what the view was going to be, it was still something else." As for his favourite interior feature, Arthur laughs as he recalls his reaction to the elaborate

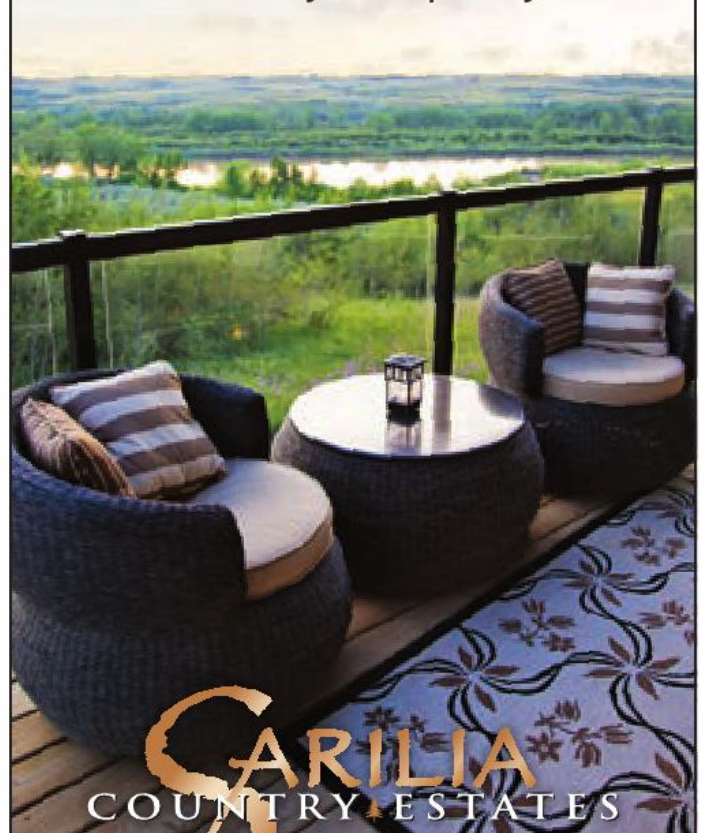
red sink in the main floor bathroom. "I used the word '*fancy*.' I walked in and said, '*Oh, that's fancy.*'"

Investment in Saskatoon

It's often said that you're not just buying a lottery ticket; you're buying a chance to dream. In this case, ticket buyers are also helping several local charities realize their own dreams. The money raised by the Kinsmen Home Lottery is reinvested in local causes that serve the community's greatest need.

"Often it's children's and inner-city community organizations. We support the arts as well," says Arthur. "We wouldn't be successful in everything we do if it wasn't for the support of the people of Saskatoon. Over the ➤

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A second-floor sitting area leads to a spacious deck overlooking the river.



years we've given out \$10 million to local charities, and a large part of that is due to the home lottery."

With its sought-after location and sense of relaxed luxury, this investment in our community clearly has the winning formula. 

Julie Barnes

WHAT'S IT TAKE TO MAKE IT RIGHT?

Mike Holmes has given the Kinsmen Riverfront Home Lottery Grand Prize Showhome his seal of approval. So, what does it take to get the thumbs up from Canada's most trusted contractor? Here are some of the specifications that were upgraded in the Lottery home to meet Holmes Approved Homes standards:

- 2x8 exterior walls for higher insulation value (R28)
- Pink coated sheathing and lumber on the exterior maximizing the durability of the wood, making it resilient to moisture, mould, rot and fire.
- Dimple wrap waterproofing on exterior foundation wall providing lasting protection from basement flooding.
- R10 Insulation below the basement slab/floor.
- Moisture resistant drywall in the basement.
- Roxul Comfortbatt insulation throughout which reduces drafts and provides structural reinforcement, soundproofing, warmer floors and resistance to fire and moisture.
- Schluter Ditra Underlayment under bathroom tiles.
- Use of a high-efficiency furnace combined with the best residential air filters on the market.
- Homes are inspected up to six times during construction by inspectors approved by the Mike Holmes Group. A few examples of the inspection items include thermal imaging and air tightness testing.



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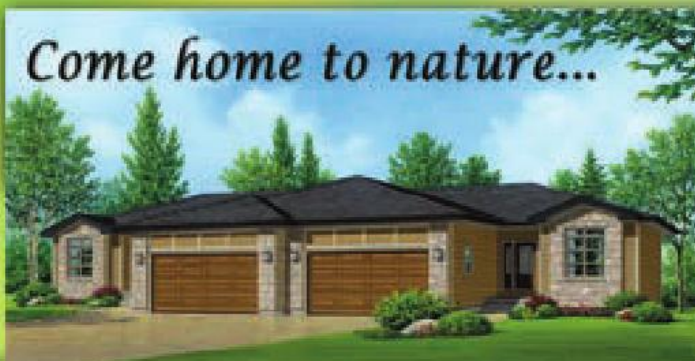


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Dr. David Puls wants to help people experience music in greater ways. He's not an audiologist, but his wealth of knowledge about the way the human ear perceives and interprets sound can change lives. While also the owner of Pulsworks Audio Arts, David is a trained musician and has

been a professional sound engineer for 34 years. David's mission is to help people hear and experience music in ways they never believed possible.

"Music is an art form, recording is an art, as is the design of the system on which that music is played," David explains. "It's the cohesion of

all of this mixed with passion and experience that makes your music an important part of your life, heard the way it was intended to be experienced."

David has designed sound systems for many clients, from construction workers to CEOs of multinational companies for whom price is no object.

He's worked with all kinds of music lovers and music venues in between. A love of music knows no class or income level. The key is not necessarily the brand or the price, but how well the system and its components work together to produce good sound. To build such a system, David— ➤

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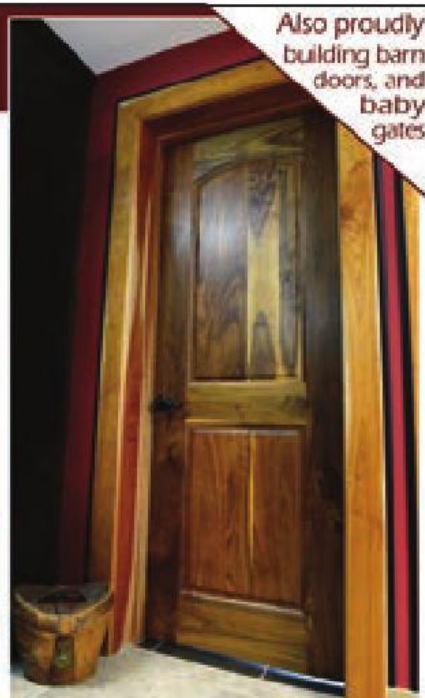
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who admits to being “a little fussy about the artistry of the craft”—starts out like a kind of musical Father confessor.

“I want to know how you enjoy music. The style, the kind of music is really irrelevant, but literally how do you experience music?” David explains. “What does music do for you?

What do you want it to do? Once we figure that out, then we can design a system for you. Ultimately, a good sound system is an expression of the person and it’s my job to find out who that person is visually and sonically.” As a result, David’s work is often rewarded with adjectives like

“awesome” and “amazing.”

Throwing together a bunch of components will certainly produce sound, but can rob the listener of the best experience. There’s an ample diet of poor production and mass produced big box systems; David bemoans a culture in which children are growing up

on iPods with MP3 files which produce only a tiny fraction of the sound quality of well recorded music. Poor sound systems reinforce poor sound and people assume that’s as good as it gets.

“A British literature scholar mused about children growing up in the slums of London.

A living room with a fireplace, two armchairs, and a coffee table. The fireplace is the central focus, with a fire burning inside. The room is decorated with a dark wood coffee table, two white armchairs, and a bookshelf in the background.

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They never ventured farther than two blocks from their home. They would never know the joy of a holiday at the sea, and they had no concept of what it means to have fun at the beach," David says. "It's the same with us. We are far too easily pleased and we are just fine with the impoverishment of our own expectations. When people hear how music is really meant to be experienced, I've had them in tears. They simply never knew such music existed. I want to give them a 'holiday at the sea.' Music as it was meant to be heard captivates and transforms us. It can be life changing."

David has taught a class called The Art of Listening that helps music lovers improve their perceptive ability, those who want to understand and appreciate music at a higher level.

"The ear is a passive instrument; it hears everything," ➤





David says. "The problem is that the untrained mind doesn't know what to do with all that information so it often just chooses to ignore some of it." He compares it to looking at an X-ray. To the layperson, the film looks grey. But to a trained eye—or ear, in the case of music—one can extract great detail and meaning."

There's "absolutely nothing wrong with simply liking music. People with minimal perceptive skills can do that just fine," David says. "But for people who improve those skills and who invest in a well designed system, it's like they're finally hearing music for the first time." 

Karin Melberg Schwier



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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Because sound systems and home theatres can be customized to unique circumstances and desires, David encourages people considering a system to first invest time in careful thought and be ready to discuss in depth:

How do I enjoy music/movies?

How can I satisfy my listening/viewing preferences?

What do I want to accomplish with a new music/theatre system?

What are my must-have essentials for music system/home theatre?

How can I assemble a system I can add to later?

Can I renovate an area in my existing home for sound/theatre?

If I'm building new, how can I plan for a dream system/theatre experience?



HOME FOOD:

Wood-Fired Oven Cooking



CRAIG SILLIPHANT



LILLIAN LANE

There's a reason that gourmards in the know prefer a wood-fired pizza baked in a brick oven, beyond the fact that it seems authentically cool. It's actually a superior way of baking the pizza. Because heat is stored within the dense walls of the oven, it radiates a lot more evenly, and leaves the floor of the oven cooler than the air above. It's as hot as H-E-double-hockey-sticks in there, so the pizza bakes incredibly quickly, ensuring a thin crust with a soft middle. The toppings themselves are perfectly cooked, retaining more of their original flavour

instead of going soggy.

I wanted to learn a bit more about wood-fired ovens and maybe try some delicious pizza in the process (I know,

have been operating what they call a 'Living Art Company,' where they specialize in succulent plant arrangements and a balsamic oils tasting studio.

*"We cook everything in our oven that we can.
Fire roasted tomatoes, meats, eggs,
vegetables, you name it."*

it's hard to have such a terrible job), so I headed just outside of Saskatoon on Highway 60 to The Firestick Café at Solar Gardens. For years now, Roger Valliere and his partner Chris

Until recently, they also operated a seasonal outdoor kitchen. However, in the last few years they realized the potential of turning it into a new space with a special centrepiece—

a wood-fired oven.

"It started with just being out in the summer kitchen," explains Roger. "People would ask for a pizza. Eventually, people would show up *just* for the pizza. One Sunday we had 200 vehicles in the yard, and I said to Chris, there's a business here. So we built a new kitchen. It took two years to build the oven." They now use this perfected art of wood-firing in their Firestick Café to cater to private groups and classes.

Historical Significance

Well, before Roger and Chris got the idea to build their ➤



own oven, wood-fired ovens were around making great pizza. The city of Pompeii was an ancient Roman community near where Naples is now in Italy. If you're familiar with the story of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, you'll know that Pompeii was laid waste and buried under 20 feet of ash and pumice. Over time, parts of the city were uncovered, and the first real excavations started taking place in the 1700s.

Amazingly, archeologists and engineers discovered that the lack of air and moisture made conditions right for an extremely high degree of preservation. This has led us to be able to determine quite a bit about the daily lives of the citizens of Pompeii at the time. If you guessed that this history lesson was heading towards wood-fired ovens, you'd be on the right track.

While these ovens have been discovered in different forms in almost every excavation of other ancient civilizations and all over Europe, the modern form of the oven reached its peak in Rome. Around 30 ovens were uncovered in the ruins of Pompeii, and they are said to be in such good shape that they could still bake today (perhaps with minor repairs).

They were used both in homes and in businesses; the shops where many of the ovens were found resembled today's pizzerias, with granite countertops and hot and cold food bars. The ovens were mostly constructed from an assortment of bricks and ceramic materials, and they're a testament to the craftsmanship of Roman civilization, even as far back as 3,000 years ago.

The Modern Era

Of course, the modern world, electricity and industrialization took over, with prefabricated metal ovens becoming the norm. This all but signaled the end of wood-fired ovens for home use, though there has been a movement in Italy to go back to the old ways, building brick ovens and using pizza recipes that have been in families for generations. And of course, like Chris and Roger at The Firestick Café, there are people all over the world who are also learning how to harness the thermal battery of brick ovens for fun, business, or both.

The Art of Wood-Firing

"We've always been interested in it," says Chris. "We didn't know anything about wood-firing at first." Now, after taking over five years of

artisan bread baking training in Toronto from none other than the head baker at Mary G's Artisan Bread, Jim Wills, they are well-versed.

I sat down at The Fireside Café (with our publisher Amanda Soulodre) to sample some of the creations from the oven and, suffice to say, I was bowled over.

After a pallet cleaning citrus salad, and delectable Pray Cups, we were treated to the Firestick's Solar Wings, which are also wood-fired. A juxtaposition of sweet and salty, these crunchy wings were flavoured with garlic, fresh mint and cilantro. They tasted like barbecued wings, but with a combined zing of sweet and spicy. The wings go to show that the wood-fired oven is not just for pizzas; Chris cooks all manner of meats and other ingredients for other dishes inside the brick oven.

"We also roast chickens, turkeys and meats in there," he explains. "After everyone leaves, we prepare for the next day. The oven is still really hot at the end of the day and that thing will cook three turkeys and five chickens at a time. We cook everything in our oven that we can. Fire roasted tomatoes, meats, eggs, vegetables, you name it."

Next, it was time for the main event—wood-fired pizzas. Chris is a mad scientist of sorts in the kitchen, and while you can get the usual suspects of toppings like pepperoni and Hawaiian, he served Amanda and me some of his most creative offerings.

"That's my mission in the Firestick Café," he grins. "I like taking a delicious meal idea and then challenge myself to turn it into a pizza." As an example, Chris pondered for quite a while on how to make a whole turkey dinner on a pizza. Impossible? The mad scientist did it. Think caramelized fire roasted brussels sprouts in balsamic reduction with cranberries, fire roasted turkey, bacon, feta and walnuts all on a thin crust pie. It's like Christmas and Thanksgiving all on one pizza.

First came a pizza called The Hangover. Hashbrowns, honey ham, fire-roasted tomatoes, cheddar cheese and a sunnyside egg laid on top. I'm inclined to agree with the menu, which notes, "Even if you're not hungover, this pie doubles as an all-day breakfast or a great brunch."

But for me, the surprise of the day that will ensure my speedy return to The Firestick Café was the Big Mac pizza. Yup. Exactly what it sounds



like. Chris experimented to get the ingredients right, especially the sauce. It may seem like a contradiction that I'm a critic and foodie who also loves a trip to MacDonald's, but either way, I was right in the pocket for this pie. It was amazing.

"The flavour of a Big Mac," says Chris, "but none of the guilt."

The guilt did come though with Chris' take on a dessert pizza, The Elvis. The King himself would be all over this 'za, smothered in peanut butter, bananas, bacon, toasted marshmallows, peanuts and dulce de leche (sort of a caramelized sweet milk). I don't know how I managed it, but after all that food, I stuffed two

pieces of The Elvis down the hatch. Let's just say I ambled to the car when we were done rather than swinging my hips like Elvis the Pelvis.

Solar Garden's Firestick Café is one of Saskatoon's best examples of using a wood-fired oven to perfection, but there is a large trend here towards people installing wood-fired

ovens in either their kitchen or backyard. There are a number of kits on the internet to build your own, and with the advice from people like Roger, who have done it for themselves, you could enjoy the exquisite wood-fired taste right at home. 🍕

Craig Silliphant

THE HANGOVER (+ THE MORNING AFTER) PIZZA RECIPE

- 1 cup of hash browns (home made or bought)
- 3 Tbsp tomato based pizza sauce (homemade or bought)
- 1 handful of grated mozza or cheddar cheese (or both)
- shaved honey ham—a good handful
- 1 roasted tomato (fire or oven roasted)
- 1 or 2 farm fresh eggs



Prepare your dough and roll into a 10" disk.

Quickly fry (for about 1 minute) the hash browns in a teaspoon of canola oil. Don't over cook as they will finish cooking in the oven.

Spread on the tomato sauce.

Then add the cheese, hash browns, shaved ham, roasted tomatoes and crack on top one egg (for the hangover) or 2

eggs (for the morning after).

Sprinkle with fresh cracked pepper.

Bake in a wood-fired oven or very hot oven (550 degrees), preferably on a pizza stone for about 3 minutes until the egg whites are set but the yolk is still runny.

Cut into the yolk and use all that runny goodness as a dipping sauce.

HOMEtown Reflections

 JEFF O'BRIEN

TWENTIETH STREET



The Albany Hotel in the 1930s.

Photo: A1753 courtesy of the Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library

Today, Twentieth Street carries on unbroken all the way from the river out to Circle Drive. But until the 1960s, the CN railway yards sliced through downtown Saskatoon between First Avenue and Idylwyld Drive, effectively separating east from west and helping to ensure that Twentieth Street west of the tracks would be a far different and much more interesting place than its east side namesake.

Twentieth Street has been the west side's premiere commercial strip since 1903, when the Riversdale area was first settled. In those days, development was clustered at the very east end, just off Avenue A, and only gradually edged its way westward. Maps from 1911 show only the odd building west of Avenue C, with Alexandra School and St. Thomas Presbyterian Church sitting alone and lonely, way



Photo: LH3816 courtesy of the Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library

out on the other side of Avenue G. But Saskatoon was booming in 1911 and 1912, and by the summer of 1913, Twentieth

Street was almost completely filled in past Avenue D, with homes and businesses strung out on either side as far west as

Avenue T, taking advantage of the fact that the newly-installed streetcar tracks ran all the way out to St. Paul's Hospital at Avenue P.

*An Old World street of many nationalities;
a casual and intimate one of shops and
stores with brightly lit-up neon signs.*

Hotel Alley

Among the earliest businesses on Twentieth were hotels, starting with the Butler, a narrow, three-storey ➤

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Photos: courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

wooden structure built in 1904 on the southwest corner of Avenue B. Across the road, the

Iroquois Hotel opened 1906, just up the block from the 100-room King Edward Hotel,

which opened the following year. In 1912, the Butler was picked up and moved a half

block south to make way for the prestigious Barry Hotel, and the Iroquois was modernized and substantially enlarged, re-opening as the Albany.

Twentieth also had its share of theatres, the most imposing of which, the Roxy, opened in 1930. But there were several other "moving picture houses" and live theatre establishments in the early days, including the King Edward Theatre (attached to the hotel of the same name), the Idle Hour Theatre across the road and the Butler Theatre just up the block. In between, Twentieth was crowded with shops and offices, restaurants and rooming houses, butchers, bakers and candlestick makers—mostly small and family-owned, often with the proprietors living in rooms above—and everything else necessary to support a growing west side population.

Men in High Places

The Twentieth Street business community has been well represented in Saskatoon politics. William Hopkins, mayor of Saskatoon in 1909-1910, built his hardware store near Avenue A in 1907. George W. Norman, who ran a print shop





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The Little Chief Texaco at Twentieth and Avenue B in 1961.



Photo: 1100-30128 courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

a few doors down from the Barry Hotel, sat on city council from 1917-1929, including three years as mayor. Another hardware merchant, Lorne Massey, was elected to council in 1910 and 1911, as did Dr. J.H.C. Willoughby, one of the founders of Riversdale, whose homestead at Twentieth Street

and Avenue P later became St. Paul's Hospital. More recently, Don Junor, long-time general manager of the Barry Hotel and founding member of what is now the Riversdale Business Improvement District, served on city council from 1968-1979. A public figure of a different sort was "Popcorn Pete," aka

Peter Molino, who for 40 years worked a popcorn cart at the corner of Avenue B, in front of Adilman's department store.

Saskatoon's Melting Pot

The spirit of Twentieth Street over the years was perhaps best captured by local historian George Kovalenko, who called

it "an Old World street of many nationalities; a casual and intimate one of shops and stores with brightly lit-up neon signs." Like Riversdale and Pleasant Hill generally, Twentieth has always been Saskatoon's most ethnically diverse area. "Like the Avenue of the Americas in New York," one long-time ➤

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Looking east along Twentieth towards Avenue B in October, 1965.



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Photo: 1100-1694-005 courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

resident described it, recalling the street in the 1950s with a mix of ethnicities that included Chinese, central and eastern European, French, German, Irish, Jewish, Middle Eastern and Metis communities; it's a list to which nowadays we would add a dynamic First Nations community.

In 1910, there were three Chinese laundries and at least two Chinese restaurants in the first two blocks, including the Alberta Café, on the south side of the street where Gasoline Alley is now. It was here that an ex-boxer and small-time hood named Morris Cohen interrupted an armed robbery, knocking the would-be robber unconscious and tossing him out into the street. It was a date with destiny. The restaurateur, Mah Sam, turned out to be tight with the man who would become the first ➤

St. Paul's Hospital in 1912, originally Dr. J.H.C. Willoughby's homestead and dispensary on Twentieth Street at Avenue P.



ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL, SASKATOON, SASK.

Photo: HSF041 courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

The Barry Hotel in better days, shortly after opening in 1913



Photo: S-COS-21-4 courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

president of modern China, Dr. Sun Yat Sen, a connection that eventually drew "Two Gun" Cohen—as he came to be known—over the sea to China, and into a life of fame and international adventure as Sun Yat Sen's bodyguard, advisor and all-around fixer.

Local Disasters and Decline

But Twentieth Street could be cruel to its denizens. On November 13, 1961, the King Edward Hotel was destroyed in one of the most spectacular fires in Saskatoon's history. Nearly every piece of fire apparatus in the city was sent to fight the fire, and off-duty fire and police officers were called in by telephone and radio broadcast to help battle the blaze and control the crowds. Tragically, when the site was cleared two weeks later, the body of the lone casualty, an elderly man who lived ➤

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there as a permanent resident, was found. Even more disastrous was the Barry Hotel fire on December 8, 1946, which gutted the building, killing 11 and injuring eight more. It was later re-built. Ironically, early advertisements for the hotel boasted about its "fire-proof construction." It turned out only the outer shell was fire-proof.

Twentieth Street had always been a little shabby in spots. To some extent, this added to its character. But by the 1960s and '70s, pawn shops and seedy adult bookstores were replacing the mom-and-pop butcher shops and five-and-dime stores of earlier years, and the street was in serious decline. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the Albany and Barry hotels.

In 1912, the Albany—described by the local paper as "among the first real, substantial buildings" on the

west side—was worth a whopping \$80,000 and employed a staff of twenty. In the 1940s, it was a happening night spot, with Al Smaltz and his Rainbow Orchestra playing Wednesday nights there at the Rainbow Dance Club. By the 1980s and

'90s it had become known as the "Dark Hole of Riversdale," a place where rival pimps once shot it out in the hotel bar (a juke box was fatally injured) and where, tragically, a bouncer was murdered on the sidewalk outside, stabbed 15 times in front of a crowd of people. Across the road, the Barry—once one of Saskatoon's finest hotels and the place where the first meetings of what would later become the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations were held in 1946, was in similar straits.

By then, the Riversdale business community was calling for both hotels to lose their liquor licenses, blaming the hotel bars for the blight that had fallen across Twentieth Street. Few tears were shed when the Albany closed in 2000 and re-opened as a halfway house for federal offenders. Even fewer were shed for the Barry, which was not only closed but demolished, erased—bulldozed into rubble and carted away.

The Changing Streetscape

Twentieth Street has changed and changed again in its hundred-plus years. Today,

it's changing once more. New businesses are opening on the street, new people are moving in, new buildings are going up and old buildings are being given a new lease on life. The historic Roxy Theatre, which faced the prospect of demolition after it closed in 1995, was instead restored to its former glory and re-opened in 2005. The Two Twenty coworking space was launched as a viable office space for artists, creatives, community-oriented businesses and non-profits to set up shop and have a home base. Farther down the street, Station 20 West, a community service centre with affordable housing, a branch library, a grocery store and other services, has recently opened.

A furniture boutique, ad agency, antique shop, unique and vibrant restaurants—everywhere you look, the shadow that for so long lay over this street is lifting. In Saskatoon, a city of interesting streets, the future just may belong to Twentieth. 

Jeff O'Brien



Photo: courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

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MASSIVE MOVES

Relocating a Home



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

Photo: Neufeld Building Movers

It's a big enough job when you're moving out of one house into another. Packing up possessions, kids, pets, dismantling your life step-by-step. But what if you want to take the house with you? Or what if you just want to get the house out of the way so you can start fresh? How do you decide if your house is destined for demo or gets a

new life by becoming, literally, a real mobile home?

Why Move It?

The reasons vary. A rebuild is scheduled on the same spot, but the old one is still functional. A small home becomes a holiday cabin at the lake or a rental property. A family can't bear to part with a home with history and sentimental

value. Sometimes a home is simply too good to demolish and environmentally aware homeowners see the value in extending the life of a house.

When Dennis and Audrey Ens were ready to build their retirement home on University Drive, they felt their 1000 square foot 1949 bungalow was simply too good to tear down. It was costly to demolish

and haul to the landfill, but it also didn't sit right with the Ens to waste a perfectly good home. They offered the house for free as long as it was moved and the site cleaned up. The purchaser hired a home moving company, in this case Neufeld Building Movers. Coincidentally, this same multi-generational business moved a barn ➤



Though it appears to defy the laws of physics, most structurally sound homes can be moved.

Photo: Neufeld Building Movers

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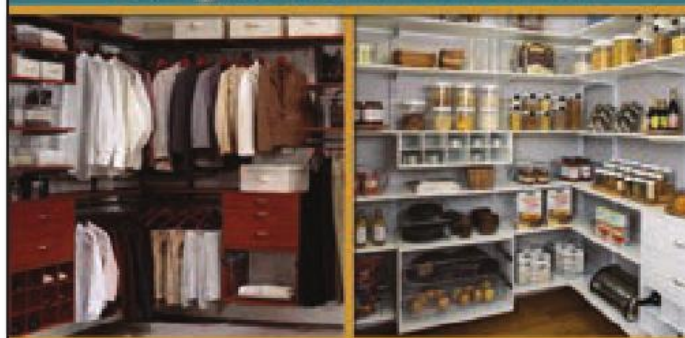
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to Audrey's family dairy farm in Aberdeen in 1962.

"We initially thought of demolishing the house, but keeping the basement," says Audrey. "But the house still had a lot of good life in it. A reno would make it difficult

to achieve the energy efficient home we had in mind. And we were assured it would be a contractor's nightmare to add on. So we decided to let someone else enjoy our old house and we'd start fresh. The whole idea of recycling

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A slow and steady pace allows for 'leapfrogging' ahead to lift power lines

Photo: Neufeld Building Movers

really made sense, too."

Kerry Neufeld, owner, Neufeld Building Movers, says the house moving industry is one of the most environmentally friendly businesses around, keeping tons of waste out of dumps. He says homes are moved for financial savings; a demo and dump run can cost up to \$15,000.

"The average relocated home saves about 40 tons of debris from going into the landfill," says Kerry, who took over the family business in 1994. "And moving a typical 2,000 square foot bungalow, for example, saves about 100 42-foot 20-inch diameter trees it would take to build new."

Thinking it Through

Jennifer Knappe of Cedar Creek Custom Homes in Christopher Lake says planning for all contingencies is critical. When the company was hired as the general contractor to manage a 2,300 square foot, two-storey house move from

near Prince Albert to Elk Ridge, there were a lot of details to sort out in advance.

"It meant getting all the right permits in place, hiring the right mover, handling all the required deconstruction and demo so the mover could do what he needed to do, building the new foundation, building a road to get the house out of the riverbank location and getting it to Elk Ridge," explains Jennifer. "We hook it all back up to be used, and now we work on a list of renos."

Kerry agrees the critical first step is finding a reputable mover. There will be a lot riding on the move, literally, so finding one who is well insured, up to date with Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) and has lots of solid experience is important.

The Ens also wanted to be sure everything was planned well to avoid any hold ups or nasty surprises. Dennis drafted a one-page letter of agreement to be sure the



Photo: Karin Melberg Schwier

recipient of the free house made all the arrangements required for a smooth move.

But is it Even Possible?

Is a house move logistically feasible? Despite how odd a house move looks, one would think it's relatively simple: just back up the flatbed, jack the house up and slide it on, raise

a few power lines and your house is now a travel trailer. When the pros do it, it seems almost that easy!

"Probably 98 per cent of houses are structurally sound enough to move, but we check it thoroughly. We won't take on a job where we don't feel it's structurally sound," Kerry explains. "We provide you ➤

Every step of a successful move has to be carefully planned and executed.



Photo: Neufeld Building Movers

with a list so you can prepare the house and know what you need to have in place where the house will end up. But then we take everything else off your plate; all the scheduling, route assessment, permits, working with the city and urban forestry. We want you to sit on a lawn chair and enjoy the spectacle!"

Movin' on Down the Highway

Cedar Creek's project meant the house was hauled over a 418 km route with "plenty of zig zags" to accommodate road

restrictions due to house size.

"We had an army of Saskpower trucks providing over 30 line lifts along the way," she says. "Normally Saskpower parks on the road and lifts the lines, but because at 2332 square foot, two-storey house took up the entire road, the snow had to be cleared out of the ditch at every location where the lines were lifted so no one would get stuck."

The Ens home was moved from University Drive in the dead of a -30 March night, and headed to Delisle by way

of Outlook because of road restrictions.

A Renewed Long Life

Kerry's grandfather Klaus started the family business in 1951 and probably never envisioned the fully-equipped and highly trained crews, and the high tech equipment and hydraulics his grandson manages today. What hasn't changed is that a well constructed home, carefully and successfully relocated, can last for generations.

"My grandfather and my dad

moved a T. Eaton house, one of those catalogue homes, in 1962," says Kerry. "In 1996, Dad and I moved the same house to a new location. It was cool that my dad had the rare opportunity to move the same house with his father and then with his son 34 years later." With that circle of life approach to recycling a house, more people can enjoy a "new" house with some history to it. (i)

Karin Melberg Schwier

MAKING THE FIRST MOVE

Selecting the right mover for the job is the most important decision that you will make. Shop around, but when you compare companies, make sure you get enough information to make a fair and complete comparison. Some provinces don't have very strict regulations, and it's up to you to protect yourself. Beware of unlicensed, under-insured companies that may put you at greater risk.

- Ask about experience, licensing and insurance coverage. Remember, once a structure is raised from its foundation, your homeowner's insurance is void. Make sure your mover has cargo insurance to cover the structure and contents while off the foundation.
- Verify that the mover carries insurance covering workers, the general public, the property being moved—and that protects you, the owner.
- Make sure premiums for the current period are paid. Insurance carriers are required by law to notify the Department of Transportation about lapses in a mover's coverage. Recouping damages from an unlicensed, uninsured mover may be difficult, and in some cases, impossible.
- Ask about references, and check them.
- Ask about the type of equipment and methods used. For instance, Neufeld Building Movers is one of the few contractors in the province to use the unified jacking system. The system is essential when making large, irregular lifts.

Courtesy: Neufeld Building Movers

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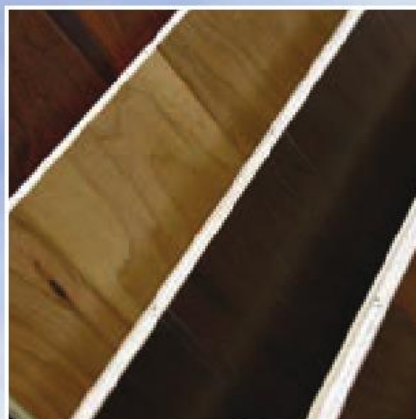


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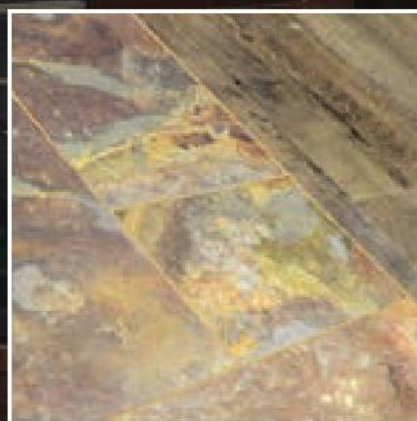


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